



**State of Florida
Department of Children and Families**

Ron DeSantis
Governor

Chad Poppell
Secretary

MEMORANDUM

DATE: June 12th, 2020
TO: Members of the Orlando Area Refugee Task Force
FROM: David Draper, Refugee Services (RS)
SUBJECT: June 10th, 2020 Task Force Meeting Minutes

THE NEXT TASK FORCE MEETING IS SCHEDULED FOR:

Date: Wednesday, Aug 12th, 2020
Time: 10:00 A.M. - 12:00 Noon
Location: Senior Resource Alliance
3319 Maguire Blvd. Orlando, FL 32803
Suite 100.
Contact: David Draper
Office: (407) 317-7335
Fax: (407) 245-2766
E-Mail: David.Draper@myflfamilies.com

This task force has been active in the Orlando area for many years. The participants are representatives of various government agencies, private not-for-profit organizations and mutual assistance associations. An average of about thirty to thirty-five people attend these meetings on a regular basis. The purpose of these meetings is to increase awareness of the refugee populations, share best practices, build collaborations between agencies, spot trends in refugee populations, characteristics or movements, help create good communication among service providers; get informed about upcoming community events at the local, state and national level, request for proposals, training, workshops, conferences, discuss refugee service needs and explore solutions to those needs. Meeting participants receive updates, information and clarification on new federal and state regulations and policy changes pertaining to refugees.

If there are any issues that you would like to include in the agenda, please contact me at the above address.

I look forward to seeing you at the meeting!

400 W. Robinson Street, S1111C, Orlando, Florida 32801

ORLANDO AREA REFUGEE TASK FORCE MEETING

INTRODUCTION

This meeting was held through a conference call. Approximately 19 people were in attendance. David Draper, Community Liaison Manager, represented the Florida Department of Children and Families, Refugee Services (RS) Program. Rosa Chaves, Community Liaison for the Central Region, was also present. All participants introduced themselves and the agencies they represented.

GENERAL UPDATES/ ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **Debbie Vega, Catholic Charities of Central Florida** announced that physical offices are open to the public, with the lobby being open from 8:30 AM to 3:30 PM. The majority of new clients have been Haitian. Clients are able to set up appointments with case managers and register for services via phone or in-person at the office. Case Managers continue assessing/interviewing clients and assisting with benefit applications. Adult education is being conducted virtually through various online ESL classes. The employment-related legal services program is primarily conducting appointments virtually but will assist clients face-to-face as necessary. They are assisting with Legal Permanent Residency and Employment Authorization applications. The Refugee Service Mentoring Program is primarily working virtually. They are focused on academic training and preparing youth for next year's exams. The refugee employment program is receiving clients via appointment only. Catholic Charities is also assisting individuals with rental assistance. The Catholic Charities food pantry is providing assistance Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, from 8:30 AM to 12:30 PM. Clients are also receiving orientation assistance and help with the school system.
- **Marie-Jose Francois, Community Health Centers**, announced they have opened a clinical care unit in Apopka and Pine Hills. Pregnant women are being sent to Advent Health Hospital. These community Health Centers are offering Covid-19 screening Monday and Thursday in Pine Hills facilities and Tuesday and Wednesday in Apopka. Dental Services are being provided as well; for appointments call to 407-905-8827.
- **Sandra Algarin, Community Health Centers**, announced they are offering pharmacy services by appointment only in Orange County at Apopka and Pine Hills facilities.
- **Anne Packham, Marketplace Project Coordinator** continues to work virtually. She advised the task force that if an individual has lost their job and needs insurance, they should contact ACA at 877-564-5031.
- **Vesna Bozic, USCIS Community Relations Officer**, informed the task force that offices re-opened on June 4, 2020, with social distancing guidelines in effect. For Citizenship ceremonies, candidates are not allowed to invite guests. Interviews will start again in mid-June or early July and candidates must bring their own pens. If there is a need for an

attorney, the attorney must be present virtually or via phone. A USCIS stakeholder meeting will take place June 18 at 3:00 PM (virtually).

- **Michael Montgomery, Community Coordination Care for Children**, informed the task force they continue to operate remotely (via phone and online).
- **David Draper, Department of Children and Families Refugee Services Community Liaison Manager** encouraged task force members to visit the DCF COVID-19 webpage for up-to-date information on operational updates related to the pandemic. EBT cards are now allowing online shopping via Wal Mart and Amazon. The ACCESS storefront offices are offering some services in-person, but it is preferred that client's call customer service for assistance.

The next task force meeting will take place on August 12, 2020. The location of the meeting is 'to be announced'.

NEXT MEETING

Date: Wednesday Aug 12th, 2020

Time: 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM.

Location: To be announced

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